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Notes

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DIVINATIONS AND OMENS IN BORNEO AND IN ANCIENT ROME

In their recent work on *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo* (Macmillan, 1912), Messrs. Hare and McDougall had the courage to suggest that the omens and divinations practiced by the natives of Borneo may be historically related to the divinations and omens of the ancient classic world; "that while the Aryans carried the system westward into Europe, the Indonesians, or some Caucasian people which has been merged in the Indonesian stock, carried it eastward; and that the Kayans, with their strongly conservative tendencies, their serious religious temperament, and strong tribal organization, have, of all the Indonesians, preserved most faithfully this ancient religious system, and have imparted it in a more or less partial manner to the tribes to whom they have given so much less of culture, custom, and belief." With regard to this attractive hypothesis it was quickly pointed out by a learned English ethnologist that, though anthropologists may consider this suggestion a mere "aside" and agree with the authors who suggest it, to champion it would be indiscretion. The book is "sure to come into the hands of the untutored public, who, with their constant desire for something sensational, will probably pay more attention to these two speculative pages than to the whole of the rest of the book" (Seligmann).

The words of this critic have proved to be more than prophetic for not—or not only—the "untutored public," but even so learned an authority as Dr. W. Warde Fowler himself has fallen prey to this attractive hypothesis. He has reviewed *The Pagan Tribes of Borneo* in Vol. II of the *Journal of Roman Studies* (1912, pp. 269-70), in which he expresses surprise and pleasure over the resemblance between the custom of divination by birds and by the use of the liver, as practiced by these pagan tribes and as formerly practiced in ancient Rome and by the Etruscans. He is even convinced from this evidence that the two may very probably have a common root and that the suggestion of the authors that such a theory is indiscreet, is going too far in condemnation of their own hypothesis. In this connection he is also impressed by the use of the pig in sacrifice.

One is surprised to find the classical scholars so tardy in tracing out these analogies between pagan customs and those of Greece and Rome. The use of the pig in sacrifice in Melanesia has for a long time been known, since it prevails throughout practically the whole Melanesian area. (See, for example,

C. M. Woodford, *A Naturalist among Head-Hunters*, p. 29; Codrington, *The Melanesians*; Seligmann, *The Melanesians of British New Guinea*; Williamson, *The Mafalu*; and H. Balfour's review of the last-mentioned in a recent number of *Man*.) For sacrifices by primitive peoples the classical student might get abundant evidence from Africa, from Ashantee to Cape Colony—and this is culturally nearer Rome.

The matter of divination through animals and of their use as omens is considered of great value as showing historical connection. Here again the practice is very general both in Melanesia and in Polynesia. In Torres Straits divination may be by the use of lice. So great is the importance attached to it in at least one part of the Straits, the island of Mer, that there is a "divinatory shrine" whereon omens are taken from the movements of insects, lizards, and such animals (*Camb. Anth. Exped. to Torres Straits*, V, 361; *Ethnolog. Coll. of Br. Museum*, p. 139). In Australia omens were taken from the lizard and from certain birds (see the works of Spence and Gillen and of Mrs. K. L. Parker); likewise in Samoa (G. Turner, *Samoa*, pp. 24-27, 29, 32, 35, 38, 44, 47). Among the Todas of India, the flight of birds was ominous (W. H. R. Rivers, *The Todas*, pp. 201, 273), as also among the Maori, who frequently took omens from birds or insects (Tregear, *Maori Race*). In America we find similar phenomena (Yana, Wishram, Micmacs, and Takelma, for example, as commonly among the Pueblos). To come nearer Rome, we find abundance of omen-taking in Africa, from the Kafirs (see Dudley Kidd, *Essential Kafir*, pp. 272-74) to Ashantee (A. B. Ellis, *Yoruba-speaking Peoples*, p. 119), as well as among the Arabs ancient and modern (Noldelse in Hastings' *Ency. of Religion and Ethics*, I, 671; Lane, *Modern Egyptians*), and presumably, in ancient Egypt (see, particularly, W. Flinders Petrie). In Asia even the Kirghizes and the Buryats divined from the shoulder-blade of a sheep.

More surprising still to Dr. Fowler is the divination by means of the liver as practiced in Borneo, with its suggestion of similar divination in ancient Rome. Borneo is not peculiar in this respect. We find especial regard for the liver in such remote parts of the world as the Eskimo (H. Rink, *Tales and Traditions of the Eskimo*, pp. 45, 54-56, 366, 369, 400), the Pima of southern California (Russell, in *26th An. Rep. of Bureau of Ethnology*, p. 185), the Chipe-wyan (Lowie, *Anth. Pap. of Amer. Mus. of Nat. Hist.* [1912], p. 185), Northern Shoshone (Lowie, *Northern Shoshone*, p. 230), the Micmacs (Leland, *Algonquin Legends*, p. 244), the Melanesians of British New Guinea (among the Koita: C. G. Seligmann, p. 139), the Tonga Islanders (J. Martin, *Tonga Islands*, pp. 342-43), the Maori (E. Tregear, *Maori Race*, pp. 48, 219, 472, 496; A. Hamilton, *Maori Art*, p. 186), the Kafirs (Dudley Kidd, *The Essential Kafir*, pp. 23, 208, 258, 273, 278-80, 310), the Kagoro of Nigeria (Tremearue, *Tailed Head-Hunters of Nigeria* [1912], pp. 171-72, 195), in Central Africa (Sir H. H. Johnston, *Br. C. Africa*).

Thus haruspication is not limited to the ancient world and to the pagan tribes of Borneo. The phenomenon is, in fact, a familiar one to the ethnolo-

gist, particularly if he be concerned especially with Melanesia, Polynesia, or Africa. Any theory of the connection of the divination rites of the natives of Borneo and those of ancient Rome will have to take account of this fairly wide distribution of similar and related things in the world of savagery. The historical hiatus must be bridged by data that show the probability of actual contact between the two in the past.

[NOTE.—An interesting paper on "The Liver as the Seat of the Soul," by Professor Morris Jastrow, is published in *Essays Dedicated to Dr. Foy*. In this connection reference should be made to the recent publication of Leo Frobenius, *Und A frika Sprach* (Berlin: Ch. Vita, Deutsches Verlagshaus), in which that writer, basing his arguments partly on similar practices of divination, supposes contact between Yoruba and the ancient Etruscans.]

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THE PARTING OF HECTOR AND ANDROMACHE

The parting of Hector and Andromache as pictured in the sixth book of the *Iliad* is regarded by lay readers as the greatest triumph of Homer's genius, but by many of the critics it is rejected as a late intruder which destroys the harmony and effect of the whole. The defects of this scene, as it now stands, have been pointed out with great detail by Naber, *Quaestiones Homericae*, Amsterdam 1877; Bethe, *Hektors Abschied*, Leipzig, 1909, and by Van Leeuwen in the *Mnemosyne*, 1910, 339 ff. That this parting came so late in the story is not seriously pressed, but that it is not indeed the last farewell seems to these scholars as a supreme poetic absurdity. Hector, according to the accepted text of the *Iliad*, returned at the end of this day's fighting to his home and his wife, that is, he spent the night after the parting, the night after the first day's fighting, presumably the twenty-second day in the story of the *Iliad*, in the city, and he seems to have been in Troy most of the two following days and nights. The success of the Trojans in the second day's fighting, the twenty-fifth day of the *Iliad*, induces him to encamp near the place of combat and to remain in the plain outside the walls. On the following day Patroclus is slain and Achilles is kept from fighting until his mother can bring him new arms. Hector spurns the wise advice of Polydamas to return within the walls, remains that night in the plain, and on the following day falls by the hand of Achilles. Thus Hector is slain on the twenty-seventh day of the action of the *Iliad*, or five days after the scene of parting. Of the five intervening nights three seem to have been spent in the city, presumably with his wife and son, and two outside the walls not far from the camp of the Greeks.

No doubt every reader is a little surprised to find that Hector and Andromache meet again after this scene of parting. Bethe sees in this account a contamination of two independent traditions and repeatedly asserts that Hector's death must have followed close upon his departure from his wife: